

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A protection apparatus that is configured to float on a body of water, comprising:

a composite-based durable barrier structure, the barrier structure configured to hold a net in place, wherein the protection apparatus protects an area in the body of water or abutting the body of water from waterborne craft; and

at least three pontoons, wherein a first pontoon is coupled to a portion of the barrier structure adjacent to a first end of the barrier structure, wherein a second pontoon is coupled to a portion of the barrier structure adjacent to a second end of the barrier structure, and wherein a third pontoon is coupled to a portion of the barrier structure between the first and second ends of the barrier structure, and

wherein the barrier structure comprises:

a beam that is coupled to the first, second and third pontoons, and that extends longitudinally along a direction of the net; and

a plurality of net holding members that extend upward from the beam;

a first brace that extends from the third pontoon to either: a) a position on the beam that is between the first pontoon and the third pontoon, or b) the first pontoon; and

a second brace that extends from the third pontoon to either: a) a position on the beam that is between the second pontoon and the third pontoon, or b) the second pontoon.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The protection apparatus according to claim [[3]] 1, wherein the first and second pontoons are of a first length, and

wherein the third pontoon is of a second length greater than the first length.

5. (Currently Amended) The protection apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the ~~barrier structure includes a beam that spans an entire length of the barrier structure, and~~ wherein the beam is a composite-based structure.

6. (Original) The protection apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the beam is in a range of 40 to 50 feet in length.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Original) The protection according to claim 1, wherein the composite-based durable barrier structure is a fiberglass reinforced plastic durable barrier structure.

9. (Currently Amended) A connector for a protection barrier system that includes a plurality of protection barrier units with adjacent ones of the protection barrier units coupled to each other by way of the connector, the connector comprising:

a tensile member configured to couple to the adjacent protection barrier units and to accept and dissipate a tensile force provided from the adjacent protection barrier units; and

a dampening member disposed at least partially around the tensile member and configured to accept and dampen a force provided from the adjacent protection barrier units,

wherein the tensile member is a chain having a plurality of links.

10. (Currently Amended) The connector according to claim 9, ~~wherein the tensile member is a chain having a plurality of links; and~~

wherein the dampening member includes:

a polymer material; and

a rubber outer structure that is fitted around the polymer material.

11. (Original) The connector according to claim 10, wherein the polymer material is a polyurethane mold.

12. (Original) The connector according to claim 9, further comprising:

first and second connecting sections respectively provided at first and second ends of the connector, the connecting sections including the dampening member and being sized so as to fit into similarly-shaped holding sections of brackets that are rigidly coupled to end of the adjacent protection barrier units.

13. (Currently Amended) A protection apparatus that is configured to float on a body of water, comprising:

a plurality of barrier units positioned side-by-side, each of the barrier units comprising a composite-based durable barrier structure, the barrier structure configured to hold a net in place in order to protect an area in the body of water or abutting the body of water from waterborne craft; and

a plurality of connectors respectively provided between adjacently-positioned ones of the barrier units positioned side-by-side,

wherein each of the connectors includes a tensile member and a dampening member,

wherein each of the plurality of barrier units includes a V-shaped brace that provides additional support for protecting against the waterborne craft from penetrating the protection apparatus.

14. (Original) The protection apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising:

at least one pontoon provided for each of the barrier units and configured to act as a floating component for the protection apparatus when the protection apparatus is placed in the body of water.

15. (Original) The protection apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the tensile member is a chain having a plurality of links; and

wherein the dampening member includes:

a polymer material; and

a rubber outer structure that is fitted around the polymer material.

16. (Original) The protection apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the polymer material is a polyurethane mold.

17. (Original) The protection apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising:

first and second connecting sections respectively provided at first and second ends of the connector, the connecting sections including the dampening member and being sized

so as to fit into similarly-shaped holding sections of brackets that are rigidly coupled to end of the adjacent barrier units.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A method of protecting a region either in a body of water or adjacent to the body of water, the method comprising:

constructing a plurality of connectors each having a tensile member and a dampening member, the tensile member corresponding to a chain having a plurality of links;

constructing a composite-based durable barrier structure, the barrier structure configured to hold a net in place, wherein the barrier structure includes a plurality of composite barrier units connected together via the connectors; and

placing the composite barrier structure in the body of water, to thereby provide protection for the region.

20. (Original) The method according to claim 19, wherein the composite barrier structure is a fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP) composite.

21. – 24. (Canceled).

25. (New) The protection apparatus according to claim 13, wherein each of the plurality of barrier units further comprises:

a bracket disposed at each end of the plurality of barrier units, each of the brackets having an opening at a top portion thereof;

wherein each of the connectors further comprises:

a chain link that corresponds to the tensile member; and

wherein the protection apparatus further comprises:

a pin that is configured to be placed downward through the opening at the top portion of each of the brackets, to thereby hold the connectors in place against the brackets.

26. (New) The protection apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the pin is configured to fit through an end link of the chain link of the connector.

27. (New) A protection apparatus that is configured to float on a body of water, comprising:

a composite-based durable barrier structure, the barrier structure configured to hold a net in place, wherein the protection apparatus protects an area in the body of water or abutting the body of water from waterborne craft,

wherein the barrier structure includes an I-beam that spans an entire length of the barrier structure.

28. (New) The protection apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the barrier structure further comprises:

a plurality of net holding members that extend upward from a top surface of the I-beam.

29. (New) A protection apparatus that is configured to float on a body of water, comprising:

a composite-based durable barrier structure, the barrier structure configured to hold a net in place, wherein the protection apparatus protects an area in the body of water or abutting the body of water from waterborne craft,

wherein the barrier structure comprises:

a beam that spans an entire length of the barrier structure;

a plurality of net stantions that extend upward from the beam, to thereby hold the net in place; and

a plurality of net station supports that extend upward from the beam to abut against side surfaces of the net stations, the plurality of net station supports providing additional support for protecting against the waterborne craft from penetrating the barrier structure.

30. (New) The protection apparatus according to claim 29, wherein each of the plurality of net stations is coupled to a corresponding left net station support and to a corresponding right net station support.